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THE Shadow™
IN THE COILS OF LEVIATHAN
KALUTA • GOSS • GIANNI

THE Shadow™

IN THE COILS OF LEVIATHAN

A Shadow Adventure in Four Parts

PART FOUR

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In the coils of Leviathan

a Shadow mystery in four parts

chapter four:
"The Ring of Fire"

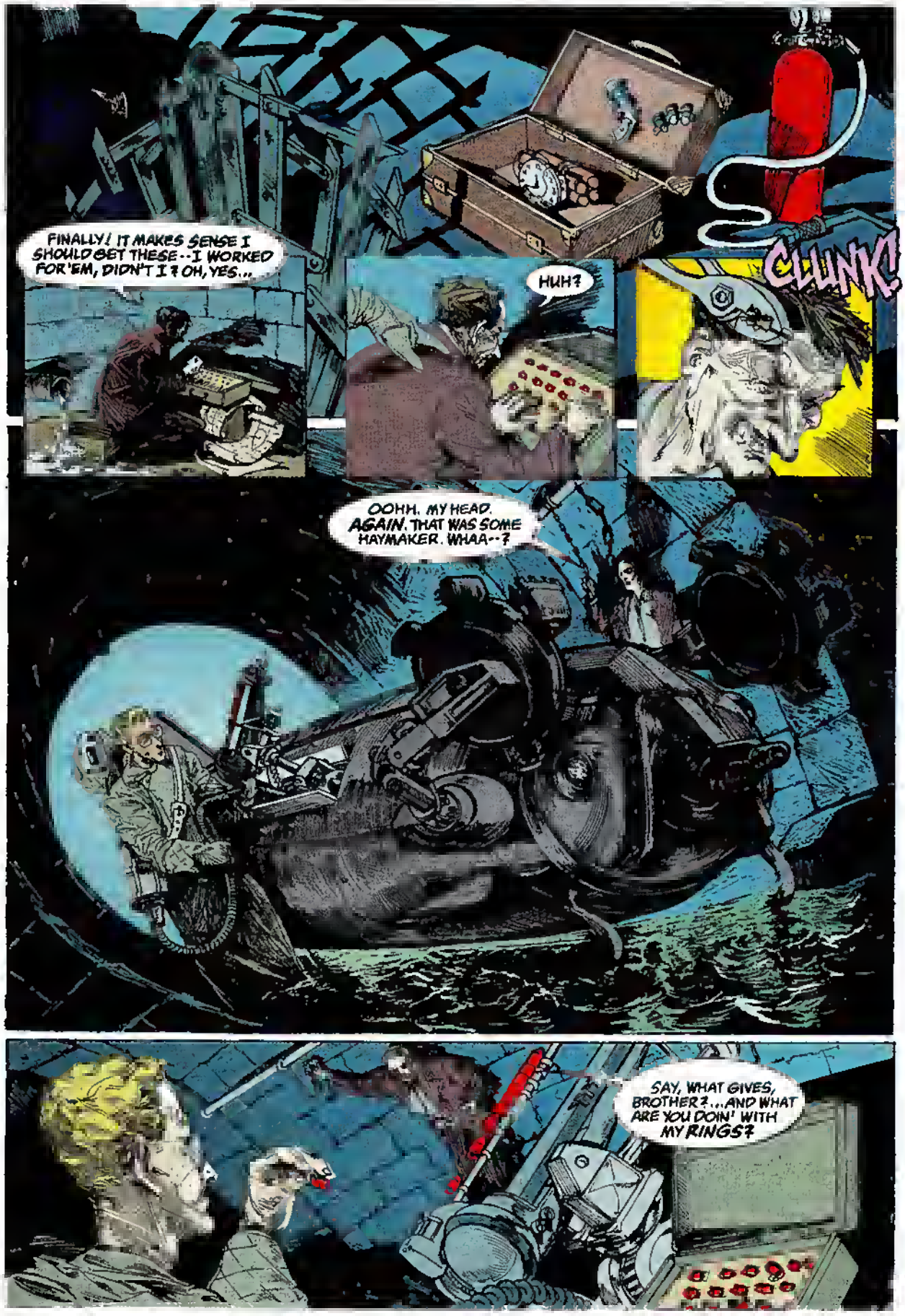
Job 41:11 Who can confront it and be safe? — under the whole heaven, who?

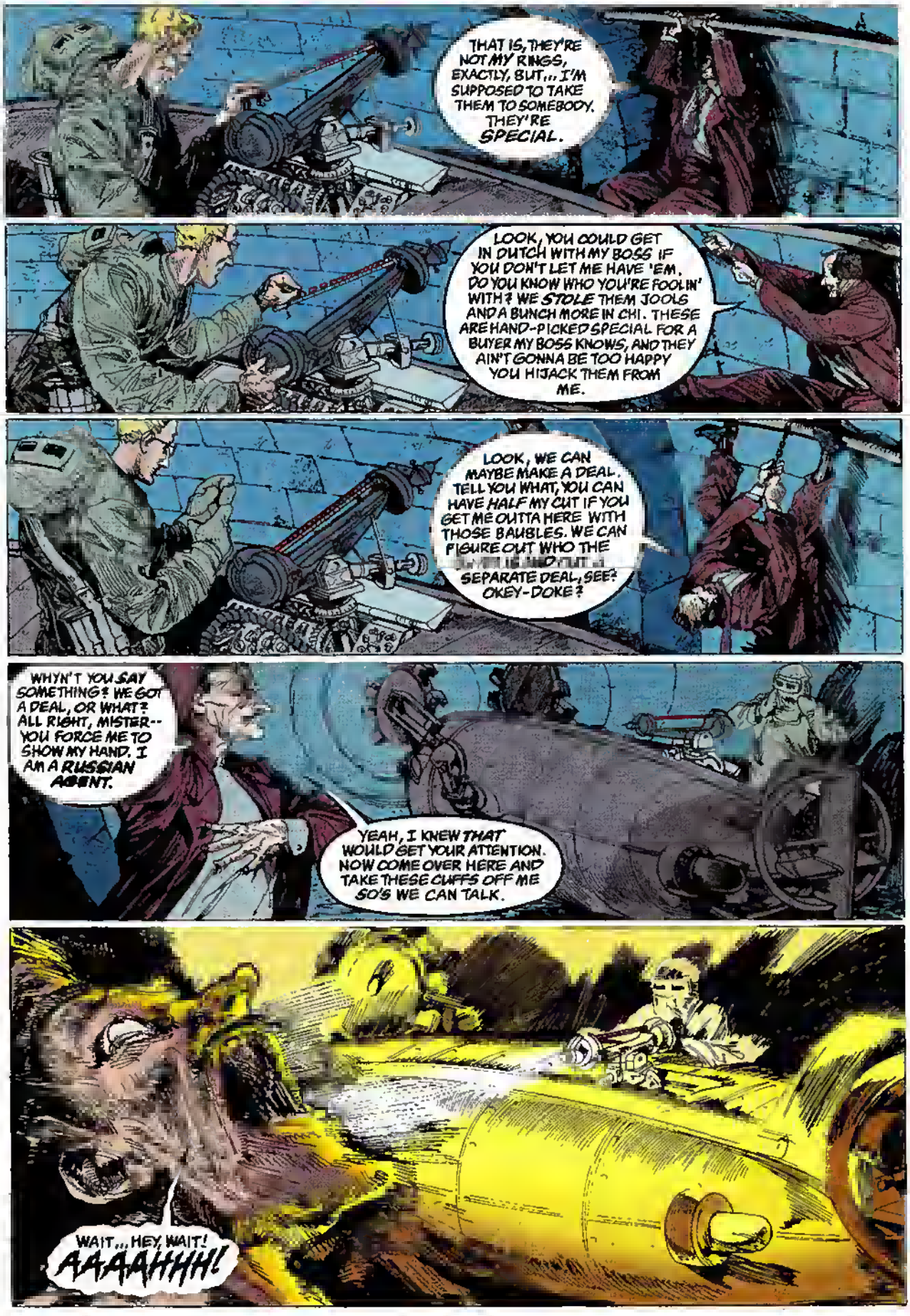
AND NOW, ALL MY PLANS, MY BLUEPRINTS... UNDER THE DEBRIS WITH WAIN AND THAT... THAT SPY WHO CAME TO STEAL THEM.
NO. THAT WAS NO EXPLOSION. MORE FLAMING DEVASTATION LEAVING DEATH AND DESTRUCTION IN ITS WAKE... YOUR BRAINCHILD GROWN INTO A MONSTER. DESCRIBE YOUR LABORS...
IT... IT STARTED WITH MY LIQUID FUEL. CHEAP AND EFFICIENT, BUT ONLY IF HANDLED PROPERLY. IT'S VERY... UNSTABLE. I HAD TO DEVELOP A NEW ENGINE TO BURN IT.
AND THE MACHINE...
THIS! THE HYDRODYNE ROCKET TORPEDO! MY OWN GOVERNMENT RIDICULED MY EFFORTS. ONLY THE RUSSIANS HAD THE FORESIGHT TO SEE THE POTENTIAL IN MY INVENTION, THOUGH THEY WANTED IT AS A WEAPON. I CONVINCED THEM THAT IT IS A TOOL FOR PEACE.
I NEEDED MONEY, YOU SEE. I HAD DEVISED AN IGNITION SYSTEM THAT CONCENTRATED A BEAM OF COHERENT LIGHT THROUGH A SERIES OF MATHEMATICALLY CUT JEWELS ALIGNED WITH A PRISM ON AN IRIDIUM ROD...
...AN AMPLIFIER.
AT FIRST I USED RUBY, BUT THAT MADE MY FUEL EXTREMELY ERRATIC AND UNSTABLE. THE PROTOTYPE'S EXHAUST WAS SPECTACULARLY EXPLOSIVE... THEN I DISCOVERED THAT GARNETS WORKED MUCH BETTER, THOUGH THE QUALITY OF THE GEMS DEGRADES EACH
TWO MONTHS AGO MY SHIPMENTS CEASED... THERE'D BEEN A THEFT ... SO I'VE HOARDED THE SE LAST FOR A WORLD NAVAL CONGRESS DEMONSTRATION.

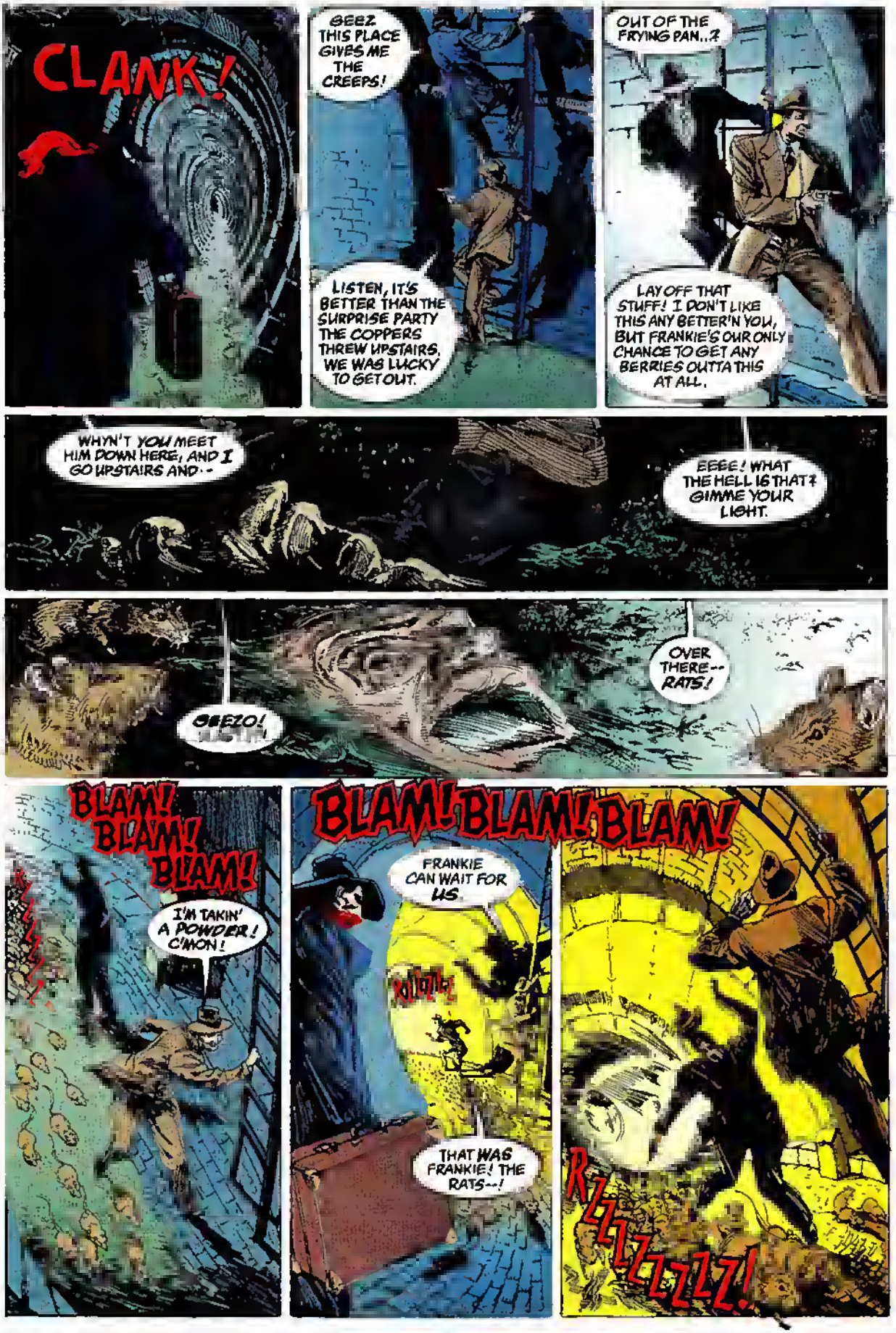
THE DOORS CLOSE, ONE BY ONE... CONTINUE...
THE GUIDANCE... A SIMPLE RADIO-CONTROLLED, GYRO-STABILIZED, ACTIVATED ARMATURE SLAVED TO A CONTRA-ROTATING TURBINE-POWERED BLADE UNITS... THEY'RE FED WITH BLEED-OFF EXHAUST FROM THE PROPULSION/COMBUSTION CHAMBER.
HERE, I HAVE ACCESS TO THE SEWERS, PERFECT FOR SUBMERGED EXPERIMENTATION WHEN LUNAR HIGH TIDE RAISES THE WATER LEVEL.
THE GARNET-TRIGGERED IGNITION SYSTEM WORKED SAFELY, AND THE ACCELEROMETER-CONTROLLED PROPELLER ARMS GUIDED THE WATER TORPEDO. A PERFECTLY MANEUVERABLE ROCKET-POWERED SUBMERSIBLE!
BUT SUDDENLY, THE DAMNED RUSSIANS REFUSED TO DEAL WITH ME.
MY ASSISTANT SUGGESTED THEIR INTEREST MIGHT BE REKINDLED BY PLAYING UP THE CAPABILITIES AS A DEVASTATING WEAPON.
BUT I REMAIN ADAMANT. THE REAL STRENGTH OF MY HYDRODYNE IS ITS POWER AS A DETERRENT.
YET YOUR ASSISTANT HAS PERVERTED THE POWER YOU IGNORED INTO THE MOST DESTRUCTIVE ENGINE OF TERROR OUR TIME HAS SEEN...
YOUR MYOPIC AMBIVALENCE HAS ALREADY TAKEN ITS INEVITABLE TOLL, MEDSKER... BLOOD HAS BEEN MIXED WITH FIRE.
YET IN THE ELEVENTH HOUR YOU CAN BEGIN TO MAKE RESTITUTION.
TAKE THIS TO THE AMERICAN NAVAL AUTHORITIES.
IN IT EXISTS ABSOLUTION, EXONERATION, AND ONE THING MORE...
...YOUR LIFE. REMEMBER THAT WHEN YOU READ THE ROLL CALL OF THE DEAD.
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA

SAY, INSPECTOR, THOSE BAD GUYS YOU HAULED IN SURE ARE A SWELL CATCH.
AND WE RECOVERED JEWELRY FROM ALL OVER-- CHICAGO, CLEVELAND, ST. LOUIS, DENVER, SAN FRANCISCO,...
YEAH, YEAH. IT'LL BE IN MY REPORT, IF I EVER GET A SECOND TO TYPE IT UP. LEAVE ME ALONE, WILLYA? GEEZ!
SLAM!
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
IF THIS AIN'T SOMEBODY TELLIN' ME I WON THE IRISH SWEEPSTAKES I'M GONNA COMMIT MAYHEM.
AH, INSPECTOR. TIME TO ENJOY ONE OF THE BENEFITS I TOLD YOU ABOUT. YOUR PICTURE IN THE PAPERS.
COME ALONG... TAKE OFF YOUR HAT. AND GET RID OF THAT STOGIE.
MY PICTURE?
WHOOOF
THIS IS TOPS IN PUBLICITY FOR THE DEPARTMENT, AND WE NEED IT. LET'S SEE YOUR REPORT.
WELL CAPTAIN, IT'S LIKE THIS--
SPLENDID. FAST AND EFFICIENT. GOOD POLICE WORK ALL AROUND. SO YOU FIGURED IT OUT FROM HER MOTHER'S LECTURE SCHEDULE, EH?
REPORT: On or about the fifteenth of this month, acting on an anonymous tip, I proceeded to stake out an address hitherto unknown to me or the department, which proved to be a hotbed of underworld activity. (See Arrest Report.)
It soon dawned on me that much, if not all, of the criminal activity had as a common denominator the theft, transfer, purchase, cutting, or reworking of good-quality jewelry and gems. This was reinforced through cross-referencing the extensive files I keep not only of my own cases, but the backlog of cases handled by my precinct house and numerous unsolved cases kept open by precinct houses throughout the city and surrounding counties.
With the able assistance of Officer I was able to identify many of red items as pieces stolen over and a half as following a phic, as well as chronological...
I'LL GET A WARRANT FOR HER RIGHT AWAY. DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO STOP YOU NOW.
SURE-- THE SAME CITIES!

ANGEL OF DEATH DEFIES DEVIL!
SISTER EUGENIA
RRRRRRR
RROWWFF!
AT MY SIGNAL


FINALLY! IT MAKES SENSE I SHOULD GET THESE--I WORKED FOR 'EM, DIDN'T I? OH, YES...
HUH?
CLUNK!
OOHH. MY HEAD. AGAIN. THAT WAS SOME HAYMAKER. WHAA--?
SAY, WHAT GIVES, BROTHER?...AND WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' WITH MY RINGS?


THAT IS, THEY'RE NOT MY RINGS, EXACTLY, BUT... I'M SUPPOSED TO TAKE THEM TO SOMEBODY. THEY'RE SPECIAL.
LOOK, YOU COULD GET IN DUTCH WITH MY BOSS IF YOU DON'T LET ME HAVE 'EM. DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU'RE FOOLIN' WITH? WE STOLE THEM JOOLS AND A BUNCH MORE IN CHI. THESE ARE HAND-PICKED SPECIAL FOR A BUYER MY BOSS KNOWS, AND THEY AIN'T GONNA BE TOO HAPPY YOU HIJACK THEM FROM ME.
LOOK, WE CAN MAYBE MAKE A DEAL. TELL YOU WHAT, YOU CAN HAVE HALF MY CUT IF YOU GET ME OUTTA HERE WITH THOSE BAUBLES. WE CAN FIGURE OUT WHO THE [illegible] SEPARATE DEAL, SEE? OKEY-DOKE?
WHYN'T YOU SAY SOMETHING? WE GOT A DEAL, OR WHAT? ALL RIGHT, MISTER-- YOU FORCE ME TO SHOW MY HAND. I AM A RUSSIAN AGENT.
YEAH, I KNEW THAT WOULD GET YOUR ATTENTION. NOW COME OVER HERE AND TAKE THESE CUFFS OFF ME SO'S WE CAN TALK.
WAIT... HEY, WAIT! AAAAHHH!


CLANK!
GEEZ THIS PLACE GIVES ME THE CREEPS!
LISTEN, IT'S BETTER THAN THE SURPRISE PARTY THE COPPERS THREW UPSTAIRS, WE WAS LUCKY TO GET OUT.
OUT OF THE FRYING PAN..?
LAY OFF THAT STUFF! I DON'T LIKE THIS ANY BETTER'N YOU, BUT FRANKIE'S OUR ONLY CHANCE TO GET ANY BERRIES OUTTA THIS AT ALL.
WHYN'T YOU MEET HIM DOWN HERE, AND I GO UPSTAIRS AND--
EEEE! WHAT THE HELL IS THAT? GIMME YOUR LIGHT.
OEEZO!
OVER THERE-- RATS!
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
I'M TAKIN' A POWDER! C'MON!
RZZZZ
BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
FRANKIE CAN WAIT FOR US.
RZZZZ
THAT WAS FRANKIE! THE RATS--!
RZZZZZZZZ!

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!
EEEEEAEEAAHHHAAHHGGHH!
"Who can penetrate its double coat of mail?"
"Who can open the doors of its face?"
AHGHHH!
"There is terror all around its teeth."
RRRRRRRRRRRZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!
RRRZZZ!
"From its mouth go flaming torches; sparks of fire leap out. Out of its nostrils comes smoke..."
"No one is so fierce as to dare to stir it up. Who can stand before it?"
WOWOOSH!
RRRRZZZZ!

RRRRZZZZZZZ!
RRRZZZZZ!
RRRRZZZZ
BLAM! BLAM!
BLAM! BLAM!
RRRZZZZZ
BLAM! BLAM!
BLAM! BLAM!
"...were not even the gods overwhelmed at the sight of it?"
"Lay hands on it, think of the battle, you will not do it again!"

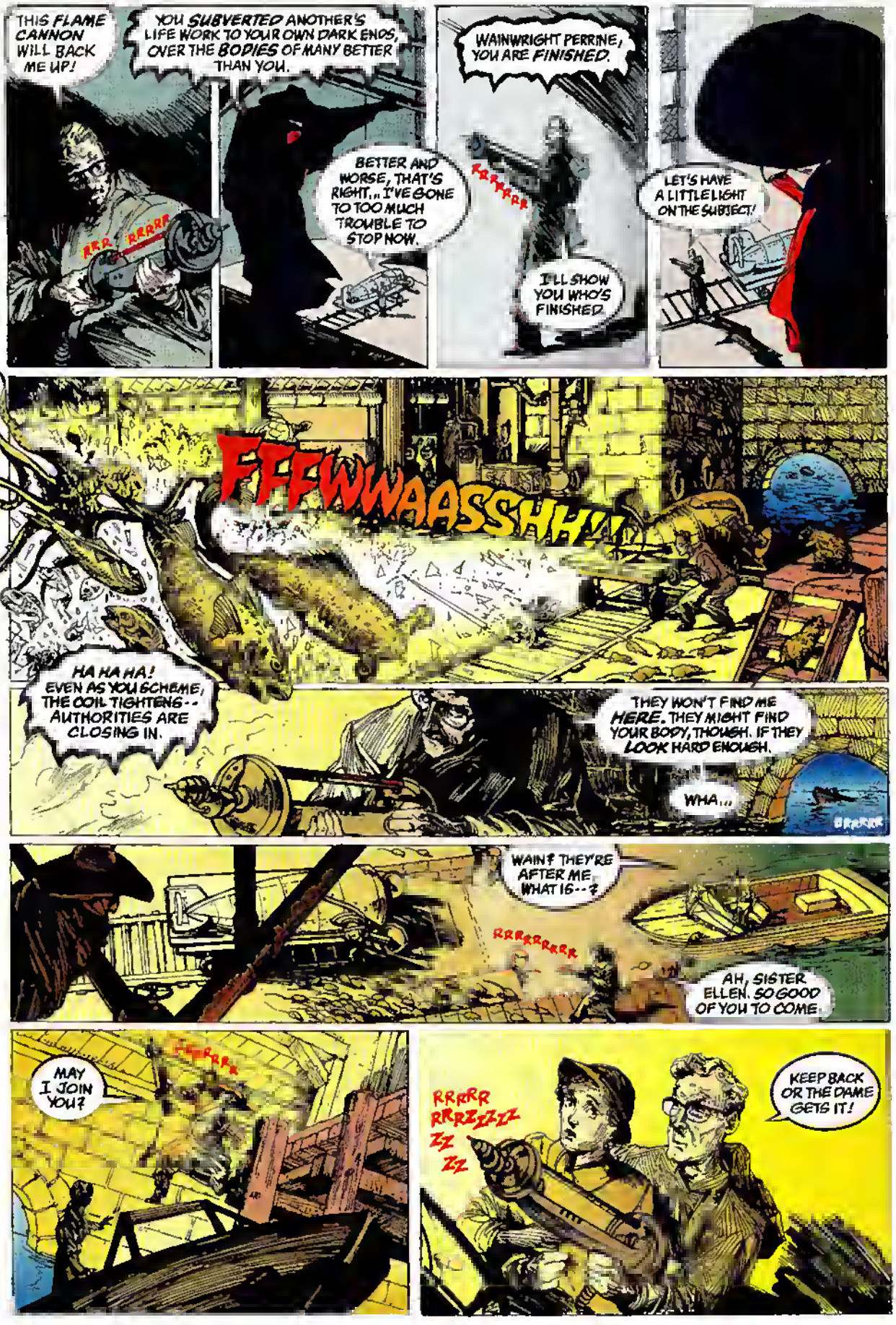
"Any hope of capturing it will be disappointed..."
RRRZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZZ
PONK!
RRZZZZZZ
RZZZZZZZZZ
RRZZZZZZZZ

BA-LAAM!
RRLZZLLZ
WELCOME ABOARD, SISTER ELLEN. WE ARE AS GLAD TO HAVE YOU HERE AS WE ARE SORRY FOR YOUR LOSS.
EVERYONE'S SEATED. IF YOU'LL FOLLOW ME, I'LL PRESENT YOU TO THE OTHERS ON THE DAIS, AND WE CAN BEGIN.

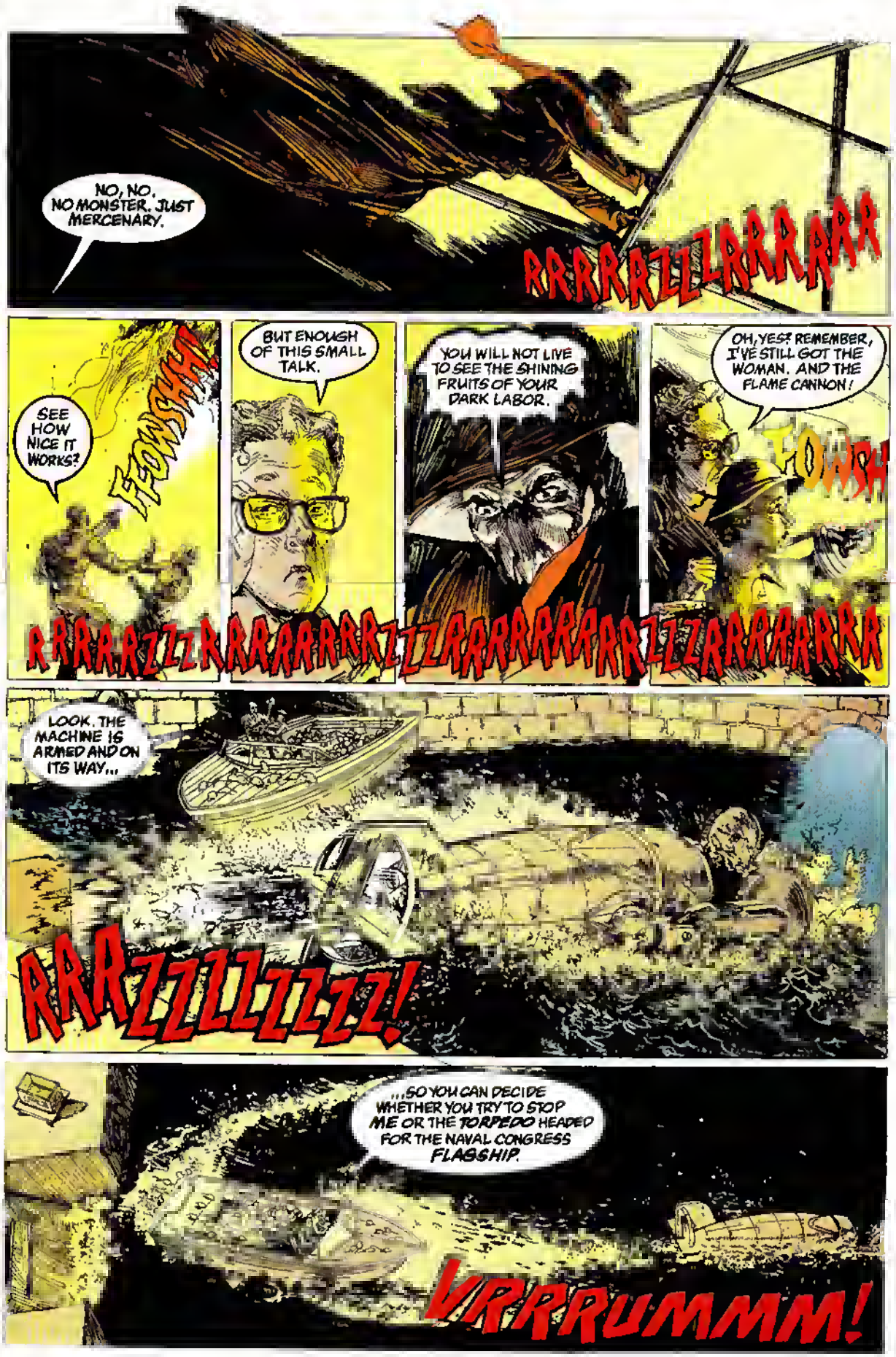
AND NOW, SISTER ELLEN OVERTON WILL SAY A FEW WORDS OF BLESSING FOR OUR ENTERPRISE OF PEACE.
THANK YOU. AS YOU ALL KNOW, THIS IS A PARTICULARLY SOLEMN OCCASION FOR ME. IT WAS TO HAVE BEEN MY MOTHER'S...
I MUST SEE ADMIRAL BLAYLOCK! IT'S VERY IMPORTANT...
YOU CAN SEE HIM FROM OVER HERE. NOBODY TALKS TO HIM WHILE HE'S ON THE STAND.
...AS WE GATHER TOGETHER IN THESE PARLOUS TIMES TO FIND A COMMON THREAD, A THREAD WHICH WE CAN WEAVE INTO A TAPESTRY OF UNDERSTANDING AND TOLERANCE...
NO TALKING! EVEN ON A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH.
COME WITH ME. NOW.
DON'T BOTHER TO TIE HER UP, BOYS. THIS SHOULDN'T TAKE LONG.
DEPUTY

...IN THE COMING MONTHS AND YEARS, OH LORD, PLEASE LOOK DOWN ON THIS HISTORIC GATHERING AS AN EPIPHANY...
I'M SORRY, SIR, BUT--
YAH YAH YAH. TAKE A LOOK AT MY BUZZER, POPEYE, AND LET ME THROUGH.
INSPECTOR, IF YOU WOULD WAIT--
YOU BOYS KNOW WHAT TO DO. FAN OUT, AND I'LL CLOSE IN WITH THE WARRANT.
THANK YOU, LORD, FOR YOUR BLESSING, AND--UH, AMEN.
AH. YES, WELL, THANK YOU SISTER. AHEM.
PLEASE, COULD YOU SEE THAT I HAVE A FEW MINUTES TO MYSELF? MY WELL-WISHERS...
CERTAINLY, MISS.
IS THE SISTER BACK HERE?
YOU CAN'T--
I CAN AND I WILL.
DAMN!

SHE'S LAMMING IT! CALL IT IN AND LET'S GET AFTER HER.
♪ "WE ARE POOR LITTLE LAMBS WHO HAVE LOST OUR WAY..." ♪
♪ "...BAA, BAA, BAA!" IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED...
IF I DON'T HAVE THE PROTOTYPE TO PLAY WITH...
...PROFESSOR MEDSKER WON'T REALLY MIND IF I FIX THE REAL THING, NOSIRREE, BUT THIS TIME...
FORTY-FOUR POUNDS OF TRINITROTOLUENE SHOULD DO IT...A SHAPED CHARGE...
HAHAHAHA HAHAHA HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA
WHO'S THERE? WHOEVER YOU ARE, KEEP BACK! I'M WARNING YOU...
HA HA HA
WARNING ME?
HAHA

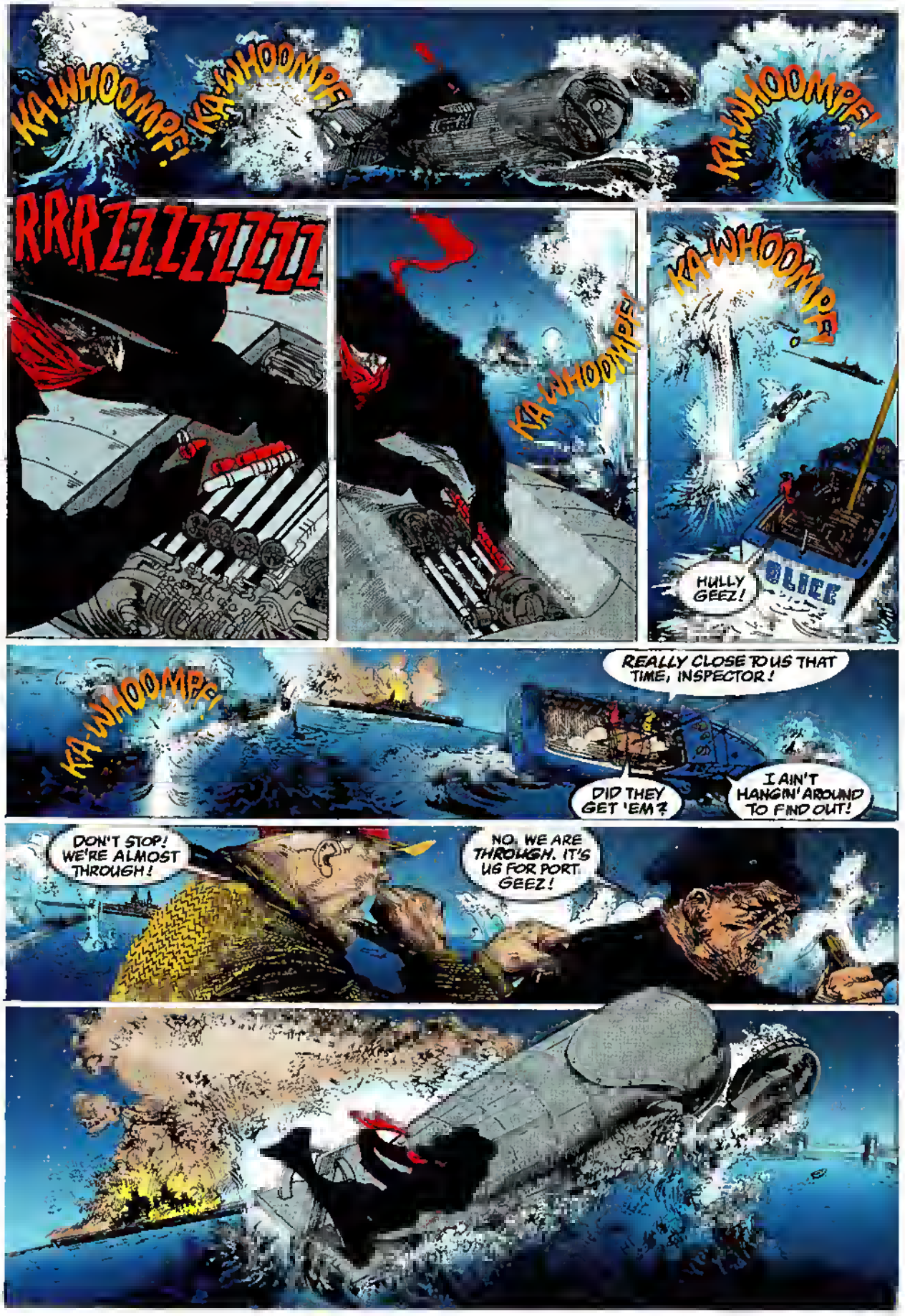

THIS FLAME CANNON WILL BACK ME UP!
YOU SUBVERTED ANOTHER'S LIFE WORK TO YOUR OWN DARK ENDS, OVER THE BODIES OF MANY BETTER THAN YOU.
RRR RRRRR
BETTER AND WORSE, THAT'S RIGHT... I'VE GONE TO TOO MUCH TROUBLE TO STOP NOW.
WAINWRIGHT PERRINE, YOU ARE FINISHED.
FRRRRR
I'LL SHOW YOU WHO'S FINISHED.
LET'S HAVE A LITTLE LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT!
FFFWWAASSHH!!
HA HA HA! EVEN AS YOU SCHEME, THE COIL TIGHTENS-- AUTHORITIES ARE CLOSING IN.
THEY WON'T FIND ME HERE. THEY MIGHT FIND YOUR BODY, THOUGH. IF THEY LOOK HARD ENOUGH.
WHA...
BRRRR
WAIN? THEY'RE AFTER ME. WHAT IS--?
RRRRRRRRR
AH, SISTER ELLEN. SO GOOD OF YOU TO COME.
MAY I JOIN YOU?
FRRRRR
RRRR RRRRZZZZZ ZZ ZZ
KEEP BACK OR THE DAME GETS IT!

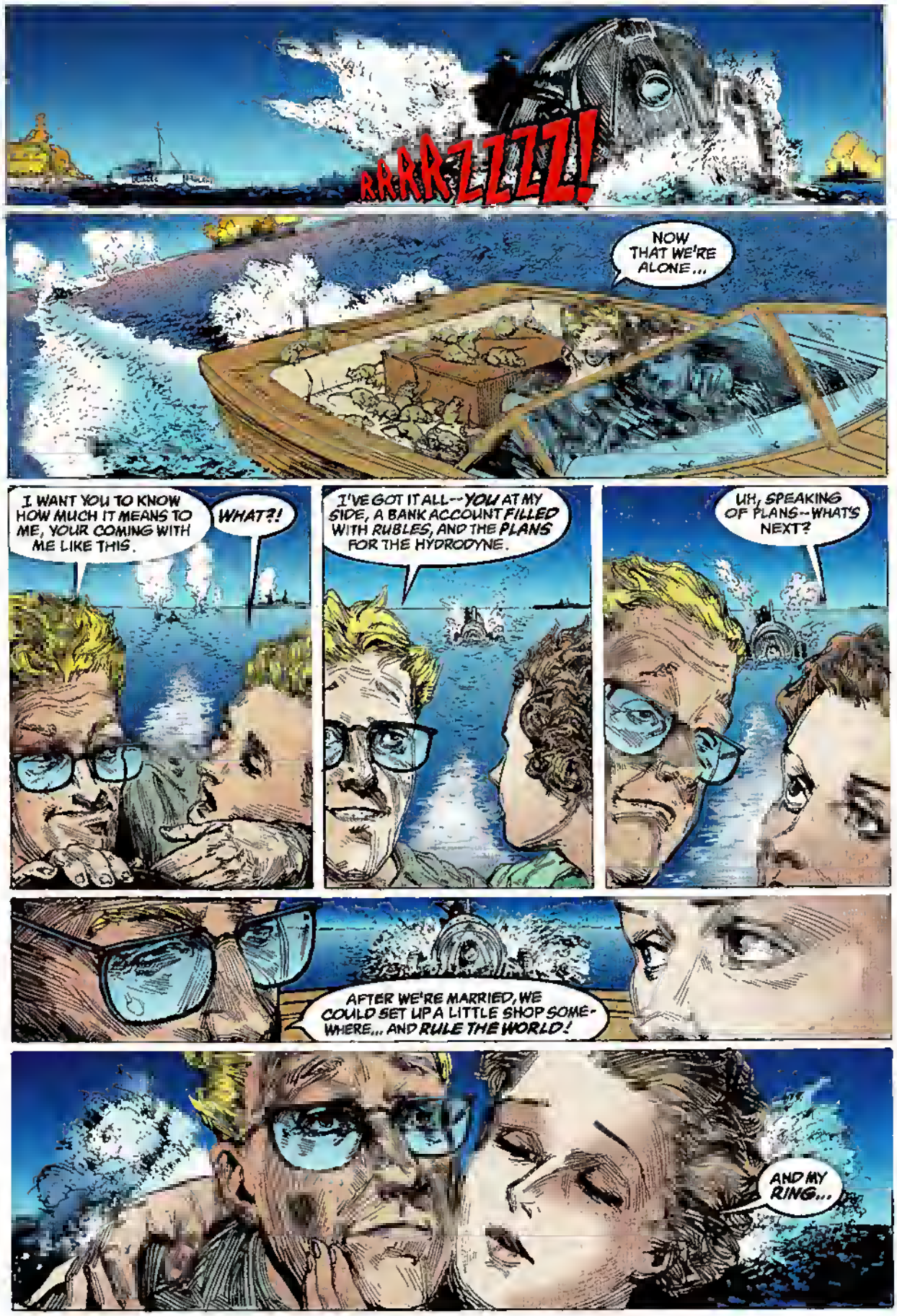
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? WE HAD A DEAL! AND I NEED THE MONEY NOW.
I'VE ALREADY GOT THE RINGS--WHY SHOULD I PAY?
RRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRRZZZRRRRRRRRZZ
PERHAPS YOU SHOULD EXPLAIN TO SISTER ELLEN WHY YOU REQUIRED HER STOLEN GEMSTONES...
A SPRINGE TO YOUR OWN WOODCOCK...THE STOLEN RINGS SUPPLIED BY YOU ARMED THE DEVICE WHICH KILLED YOUR MOTHER.
WHAT?! WAIN, IS THIS...?
WHO IS THAT? WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT? WAIN?
RRRRZZZRRRRRRRRRZZZZRRRRRRRRRRR
TRUE? SURE! I DID IT. AH, GOOD, THE RATS.
OH MY GOD!
YOU DIDN'T ASK WHY I NEEDED YOUR RINGS. YOU MUST HAVE SUSPECTED WHEN YOUR GANG IN THE SEWERS KEPT TURNING UP DEAD...I USED THEM FOR MY TESTS.
GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU MONSTER!
RRRRZZZRRRRRRRRRRZZZRRRRRRRRRRRRR

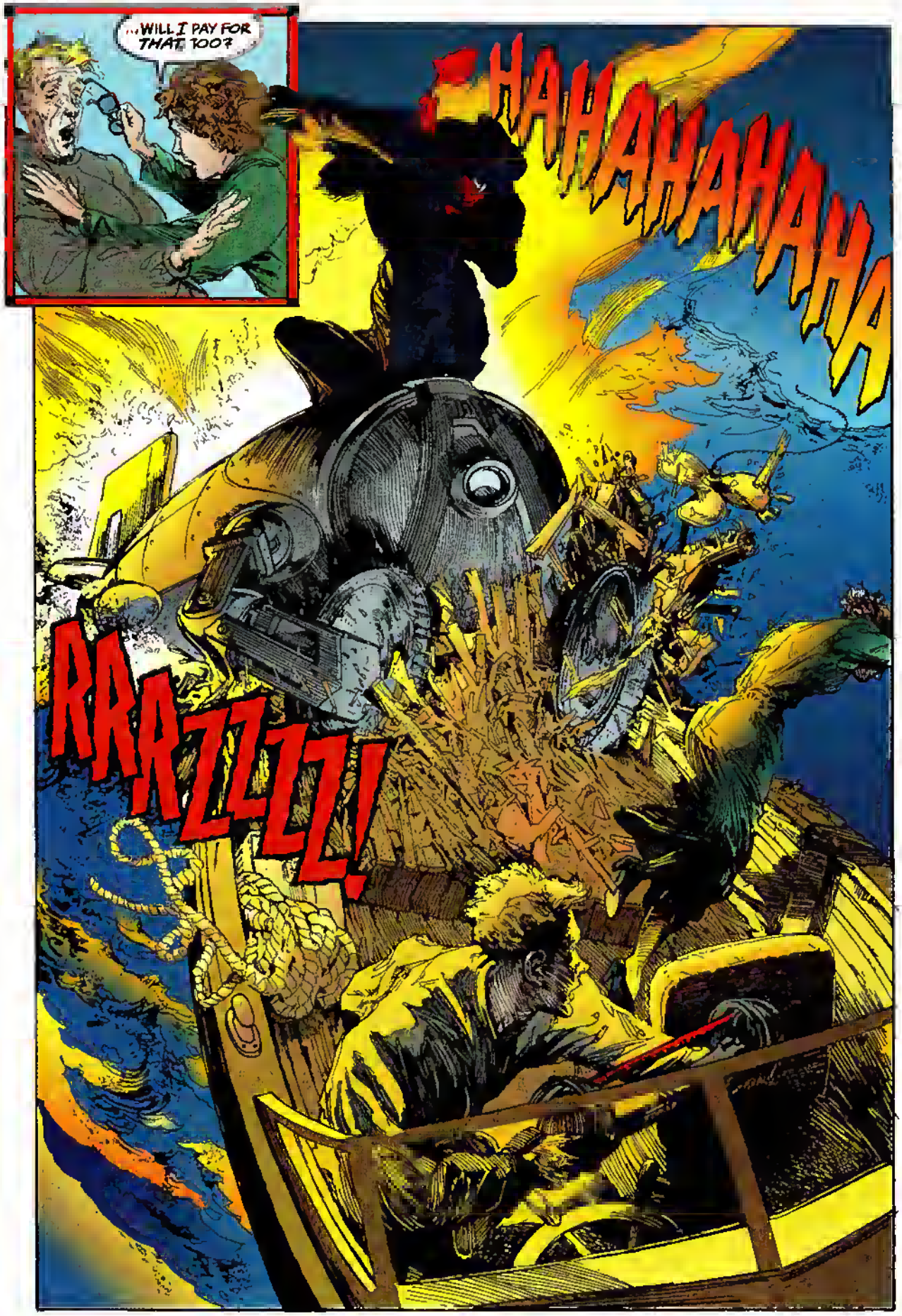

NO, NO. NO MONSTER. JUST MERCENARY.
RRRRRZZZRRRRRR
SEE HOW NICE IT WORKS?
FOWSH!
BUT ENOUGH OF THIS SMALL TALK.
YOU WILL NOT LIVE TO SEE THE SHINING FRUITS OF YOUR DARK LABOR.
OH, YES? REMEMBER, I'VE STILL GOT THE WOMAN. AND THE FLAME CANNON!
FOWSH!
RRRRRZZZRRRRRRRRRZZZRRRRRRRRRZZZRRRRRRRR
LOOK. THE MACHINE IS ARMED AND ON ITS WAY...
RRRZZZZZZZZZ!
...SO YOU CAN DECIDE WHETHER YOU TRY TO STOP ME OR THE TORPEDO HEADED FOR THE NAVAL CONGRESS FLAGSHIP.
VRRRUMMM!

CRASH!
TINKLE
RRZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ
POLICE
RRRRZZZZZ!

RRZZZZ!
THERE!
WELL?
YES, INDEED. EVERYTHING I SAID IT WOULD BE!
VERY GOOD. AS SOON AS WE'VE GOT THE RANGE... FIRE AT WILL.
WE'VE GOT NO ROOM FOR ERROR HERE.
SIR?
IT APPEARS TO BE HEADED RIGHT AT US.
KRAK
BOOM!
BOOM!
KRAK
BATHOOM!


KA-WHOOMPF!
KA-WHOOMPF!
KA-WHOOMPF!
RRRZZZZZZZZ
KA-WHOOMPF!
KA-WHOOMPF!
HULLY GEEZ!
POLICE
KA-WHOOMPF!
REALLY CLOSE TO US THAT TIME, INSPECTOR!
DID THEY GET 'EM?
I AIN'T HANGIN' AROUND TO FIND OUT!
DON'T STOP! WE'RE ALMOST THROUGH!
NO. WE ARE THROUGH. IT'S US FOR PORT. GEEZ!


RRRRZZZZZ!
NOW THAT WE'RE ALONE...
I WANT YOU TO KNOW HOW MUCH IT MEANS TO ME, YOUR COMING WITH ME LIKE THIS.
WHAT?!
I'VE GOT IT ALL--YOU AT MY SIDE, A BANK ACCOUNT FILLED WITH RUBLES, AND THE PLANS FOR THE HYDRODYNE.
UH, SPEAKING OF PLANS--WHAT'S NEXT?
AFTER WE'RE MARRIED, WE COULD SET UP A LITTLE SHOP SOMEWHERE... AND RULE THE WORLD!
AND MY RING...


...WILL I PAY FOR THAT 100?
HAHAHAHAHA
RRRZZZZ!

THE WEED OF CRIME BEARS BITTER FRUIT, WAINWRIGHT PERRINE!
CRIME DOES NOT PAY!
WHOOFF
I DON'T NEED HER -- I'VE GOT THE PLANS, AND I'LL GET YOU!
THE PLANS! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
RRRIPP!
USHERING YOU TO HELL.
HAHAHAHA!
RRZZZZZ!

HAHAHAHA!
OH, MY--
RRRZZZZZZ
"FORTY-FOUR POUNDS OF TRINITROTOLUENE SHOULD DO IT..."
ZZZZZZZZ
ZZZZZZ
KKRAT-TA-WHOOMB!

THE NEXT NIGHT...
HOLD IT A MINUTE, SISTER...
OVERTON
YOU LOOKIN' FOR AN ESCORT?
THANK YOU...
...I THINK YOU'RE GOING MY WAY.
YEAH...
HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!

Sunset's passing reflection retreats, taking with it the last memory of the brighter life I've contemplated from behind the intertwined fingers of my gloved hands. Gone again are the dancing motes of Application and Hopefulness, Forthrightness and Humility, clearing the Night-stage, leaving it to the slowly emerging entities self-subscribed to the Haunted Hours. The ensuing air of charnel expectancy presents the oblong perforated slab of My City as something other than, yet akin to, the slit open wall of the Tomb. And focused in the

lens of my consideration stands a figured composite of the multiple thousand criminals whose tide ring of base cruelty patinas the walls of this sequestered cavity of aggression and evasion. An eternal You. Without the spur of retribution your crime becomes mundane, your evil intent an uncontrolled inconsideration gliding toward the salavic pool of insipid casual pastime—a sort of breathing puppet gesture with no effort of personal involvement—while you cry that you are owed a living by the World. The Crime of your crime becomes insult in addition to injury; the unasked question I take as mine to answer.

From outside the perimeter of your insignificant dream the pockets of light beckon the memory of who you were, when? You can no longer remember. A snare drum taps in your brain.

Isn't your hand the hand that moves against the rewards of Humanity with a self-love inspired single-mindedness... isn't it your boast that you search not for shadowed anonymity in the lee of brighter personalities, but a well-lit corridor of focused admiration, a tube of consent to siphon the praise of one's imagined betters.

Your foot feels for the top step and I take it from you... as you fall through the night my laughter follows... I will laugh behind you for the ones you gracelessly pillaged of their belief in hope. I will point and mock behind you for the ones who lost their ability to justify your life: they were to be your last escape.

I will be there by the wall, in the corner of your laughter, in the hollow of your comfort, in the tide of your lovemaking.

To say to you: thou shalt not sleep but to dream of me; thou shalt not wake but to see my figure leaning across the path of your life; I will deny you the joys of a life earned at the expense of the Still Believing... you will never again smile in amusement without the crinkled eyelid of doubt.

Your hand cannot move to the door handle without a catch, a movement held back in consideration of considerations you've neglected in the account of your life; no corner can be backed into without my breath on your neck. You will know of me yet be unable to speak, even to those whose eyes tell your eyes they know what you now know... there is no peace in the knowledge of me. I will move in your shadow as I move in my own. Where you've been you can no longer go—there is finally a door in your path unconsidering of your desires, that will not open to your knock though you bloody your fist.

You will not taste bread without sand, water without brine, love without mockery. I will make certain you devour yourself. You will not turn your head except to glance back, expecting me. You will not walk without listening for my footfall, hearing it in your every step, in your every heartbeat. You will not run without my shadow pursuing you: in front when you look behind, behind when you think to look forward. You will not reach for the light without encountering the dark fang of your own spite and desire biting at your hand. It is leashed and obeys me. No matter which way you turn every light bulb is

broken, every door locked, though the handle turns and turns...

I will surround you with the once-grasped-for envelope of darkness... you will not shut your eyes without seeing MY eyes, my eyes... your eternal hidden darkness with the unthought-of addition of my glowing eyes.

You will breathe the salt that stains the forgotten faces of your handiwork in creeping awareness that you no longer lean over the basin of another's anguish,

wiping the corners of your mouth with the sleeve you so casually dipped in their blood.

Your last halting breath I will suck from your expectant lips— I will give it back to the silent ones you've stolen it from. I will fragment your peace of mind and share the divided shards among the starving souls you've raped of theirs...

I will plug your ears with your recurring lies, your mouth I will fill with your prodigal repentances, I will hold back your hand from the one last collar you might grasp in your panicked awareness that it is now YOUR immortal soul that is sliding into the pit you dug for so many others... and know, count on it: they are waiting there with your laughing face for a welcome.

I will haunt you as the chosen focus you longed to be.

How often have you held out your bruised subjects for the hoped-for off-stage applause of an imagined presence: a Mastermind, a Potent Force, casting in your own truncated self-image some Lord of Crime, mailed fist holding all the cords of Award and Despair. It was he who would turn his eye from the Banquet at your catalogue of infliction to dispense the rewards you believed yourself to have earned in imitation of this Figment, this Icon, this Power. You stretched beyond your full height in grateful anticipation, not expecting to find ME standing across the laden table. When you courted the notoriety you saw as laurel, you could not guess who'd spread the table and polished the proffered crown, holding it just out of your reach above the pit of undulations, the pit of lamentation, the eternal falling dream of not daring to open your eyes...

Cry out that you are not the only one to blame: is this the excuse you offer to the blameless who now blame you?

Cry out that you are sorry and the repetition will only paper the blank wall of dread around you with the accusing epitaph of sorrow you caused into being by the wake of your passage through these others' lives.

Cry out in anger, in petulance, in blind fury, rage, and impotence... it will only echo back in fugued octaves of your fear.

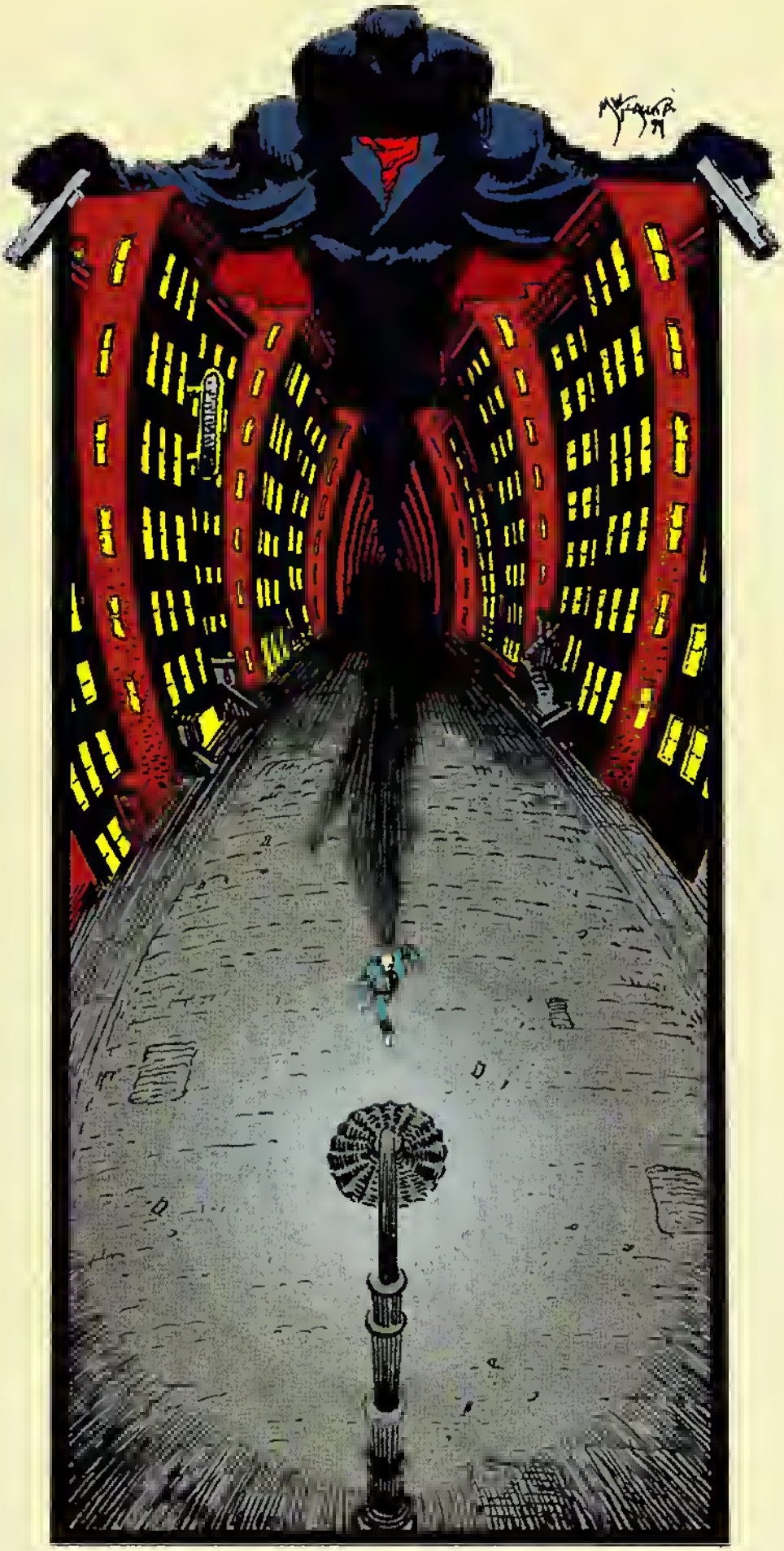
This is where it comes to, a perimeter mapped and crafted by your considered neglect. This is the vortice you are meant to turn in, where every wall is the wall of your shame.

Would you tell me now of your self-loathing, your bile, your illness of spirit and substance, of your inner betrayal, your inner affliction? As if I didn't KNOW?

Would you tell me now, at long last, of your Repentance?

In my laughter you will hear my final judgment:

Tell it to the Worms.



HARD CASES, HARD KNOCKS, HARD TIMES,

Andrew Vachss

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